AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 1, as follows:

TITLE ~~OF THE INVENTION~~.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 4, as follows:

Technical Field ~~of the Invention~~.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 6, as follows:

~~The present~~ Present non-limiting embodiments relate ~~invention relates~~ to game machines and game programs ~~therefor~~ executed by such game machines. ~~and, more~~ More specifically, present non-limiting embodiments relate to game machines for evaluating timings based on a player's operation, ~~preferably~~ including evaluating timings of a game process (presentation effects) based on a plurality of players' operations corresponding to reproduction of music data, and game programs to be executed by such game machines.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 14, as follows:

Description of ~~the~~ Background Art.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 15, as follows:

This type of conventional game machine has been disclosed, for example, in ~~the~~ Japanese Patent Laid-Open Publication No. 2000-237454. In such a game machine, a drum rhythm game machine and a guitar rhythm game machine are synchronized with each other in terms of BGM music and presentation instructions so that harmonious music play can be realized as actual band play.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 22, as follows:

In the conventional technique described in the above publication, however, the game machines (drum rhythm and guitar rhythm) independently evaluate the player's operation~~,~~. ~~and the~~ The manner of evaluation ~~manner of which~~ of each player's operation is exactly the same as the case of single player, ~~determining~~ involving a determination of whether or not a predetermined criterion is met.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 2, as follows:

Therefore, even if a plurality of game machines perform music play at the same time, there is not much correlation among the game machines (band parts), and there is not much fun ~~either of getting~~ in obtaining a high score through teamwork either. Moreover, the evaluation manner remains exactly the same between independent play and harmonious play, thereby failing to provide zest and surprise.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 9, as follows:

SUMMARY OF ~~THE INVENTION~~EXEMPLARY NON-LIMITING EMBODIMENTS.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 10, as follows:

Therefore, an object of ~~the present invention~~ present exemplary non-limiting embodiments is to provide game machines capable of performing evaluation, in a game played by a plurality of game machines, according to the correlation among operation information obtained through communications with each of the game machines, and game programs executed in such game machines.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 16, as follows:

~~The present invention has~~ Present exemplary non-limiting embodiments may include one or more of the following exemplary features to attain the object above.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 18, as follows:

A first aspect of ~~the present invention~~ present exemplary non-limiting embodiments is directed to a game machine for executing a predetermined game in response to a player's operation. ~~, and the~~The game machine comprises a display section, operation switches, a communications section, a start timing

synchronization section, a prompt information storage section, a display control section, first and second operation timing storage sections, and a correlation evaluation section.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 10, as follows:

Further, ~~preferably,~~ an independent evaluation section may be further provided for evaluating whether the timing based on the data stored in the first operation timing storage section is in a predetermined range from the timing based on the operation timing data.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 19, as follows:

Also, ~~preferably,~~ the correlation evaluation section may evaluate whether both the timing based on the data stored in the first operation timing storage section and the timing based on the data stored in the second operation timing storage section are in a predetermined range.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 12, as follows:

Further, ~~preferably,~~ the correlation evaluation section may evaluate whether the timing based on either the data stored in the first operation timing storage section or the data stored in the second operation timing storage section is in a predetermined range from the timing based on the operation timing data at a

predetermined timing, and whether both the timing based on one of the data and the timing based on the other data are in the predetermined range.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 20, as follows:

In such a structure, only when the degree of the coincidence with the predetermined criterion is high, evaluation is made against any condition for the correlation among the operation information being satisfied. Thus, the independent evaluation is always considered~~,~~ with no contradiction.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 9, as follows:

With such a structure, there are a plurality of operation timings which are supposed to be operated by the player, whereby the game can be increased in complexity. If this is the case, at least one timing to be evaluated may be selected from the operation timings so that the communications amount can be reduced among the plurality of game machines.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 3, as follows:

As a result, by applying the above described game machine to the music game, the effects of the present ~~invention~~ exemplary non-limiting embodiments can become more apparent.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 19, as follows:

Here, the segment of the game is when, for example, one music is ended in a music game as in an exemplary embodiment, which will be described later. As other possibilities, one phrase may be regarded as a segment, or a time when a plurality of selection of music are played may be regarded as a segment. Alternatively, when it is not ~~the~~ a music game being played, a time when one stage is cleared may be a possibility.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 8, line 1, as follows:

With such a structure, the communications is required only at the beginning and at the end of the game play, and thus there is no need for connection among the game machines by communications cables, for example. Therefore, the game machine, especially ~~the~~ a portable-type game machine, can be moved freely during the game play, and the players may not be distracted and concentrate only on the game. ~~What is~~ Even better, no communications ~~is~~ are made during the game play so that the game ~~machines~~ machines' processing loads are reduced ~~in process load~~.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 9, line 2, as follows:

A second aspect of ~~the~~ present exemplary non-limiting embodiments ~~invention~~ is directed to a game machine for executing a predetermined game in response to a player's operation, and the game machine comprises a display

section, operation switches, a communications section, a start timing synchronization section, a processing section, first and second timing storage sections, and a correlation evaluation section.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 10, line 2, as follows:

As described above, in the second aspect, what is evaluated is not the operation timings but the timing of the game process based on the operation timings, thereby widening the applicable game range.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 10, line 6, as follows:

A third aspect of ~~the~~ present exemplary non-limiting embodiments ~~invention~~ is directed to a game system structured by a plurality of a game machine for executing a predetermined game in response to a player's operation, and a data processing device for evaluating operational correlation among the plurality of the game machines. The game machine comprises a display section, operation switches, a communications section, a start timing synchronization section, a prompt information storage section, a display control section, an operation timing storage section, and an operation timing data transmission section, and the data processing device comprises a timing data storage section, and a correlation evaluation section.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 10, line 18, as follows:

The display section displays a game screen. The operation switches are operated by the player. The communications section performs data communications between other game machines and the data processing device. The start timing synchronization section establishes start-timing synchronization with the other game machines in the game by communications via the communications section. The prompt information storage section stores operation timing data defining an operation timing of the operation switches to be operated by the player. The display control section has, in response to when the game is synchronously started, the display section displayed information about the operation timings of the operation switches to be operated by the player based on the operation timing data. The operation timing storage section stores data relating to the operation timings of the operation switches operated by the player responding to the information displayed on the display section. The operation timing data transmission section transmits the data of the operation timing storage section to the data processing device through communications via the communications section. The timing data storage section receives and stores the data, one by one, transmitted from the operation timing data transmission section through communications via the communications section. The correlation evaluation section evaluates correlation among the game machines in terms of game operation based on the data stored in the timing data storage section.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 11, line 27, as follows:

A fourth aspect of ~~the~~ present ~~invention~~ exemplary non-limiting embodiments is directed to a program for controlling a game executed in a game machine, and the program when executed comprises a synchronizing step, a reading step, a displaying step, a storing step, an acquiring step, and an evaluating step.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 12, line 3, as follows:

In the synchronizing step, data communications is performed among other game machines so as to establish start-timing synchronization in the game. In the reading step, read is operation timing data defining an operation timing of operation switches to be operated by a player. In the displaying step, in response when the game is synchronously started, a display section of the game machine is caused to display information about the operation timings of the operation switches to be operated by the, player based on the operation timing data. In the storing step, ~~stored is its own~~ data relating to the operation timings of the operation switches operated by the player in response to the information displayed on the display section is stored. In the acquiring step, through communications, ~~acquired is~~ other data relating to the operation timings of the operation switches operated by the player in the other game machines is acquired. In the evaluating

step, ~~evaluated is~~ correlation among the other game machines in terms of game operation based on the its own data and the other data is evaluated.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 12, line 20, as follows:

In order to apply the program of the fourth aspect to the music game, ~~included may be~~ the synchronizing step, a generating step, a selecting step, a synchronizing step, the reading step, the display step, a setting step, the storing step, the acquiring step, and the evaluating step may be included.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 12, line 25, as follows:

In the generating step, ~~generated is~~ a predetermined sound is generated in response to a player's operation of operation switches. In the selecting step, ~~selected is~~ one part out of a plurality of those relating to music play is selected. In the synchronizing step, start-timing synchronization is established in the game through data communications performed among other game machines. In the reading step, ~~read is~~ operation timing data defining a plurality of the operation timings of the operation switches to be operated by the player at least for the selected part is read. In the displaying step, in response when the game is synchronously started, a display section of the game machine is caused to display information about the operation timings of the operation switches to be operated by the player at least for the selected part out of the information based on the

operation timing data. In the setting step, at least one of the plurality of operation timings based on the operation timing data is set as an evaluation timing. In the storing step, ~~stored is its own~~ data relating to the operation timings corresponding to the evaluation timing out of the operation timings of the operation switches operated by the player in response to the information displayed on the display section is stored. In the acquiring step, through communications, ~~acquired is~~ other data relating to the operation timings of the operation switches operated by the player in the other game machines is acquired. In the evaluating step, ~~evaluated is~~ correlation among the other game machines in terms of game operation based on the its own data and the other data is evaluated.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 14, line 1, as follows:

Here, ~~it is preferable to further include~~ a step of evaluating whether the timing based on the its own data in storage is in a predetermined range from the timing based on the operation timing data may be included.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 14, line 5, as follows:

~~It is also preferable that~~Also, the evaluating step may evaluate whether both the timing based on the its own data and the timing based on the other data are in a predetermined range.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 14, line 8, as follows:

Alternatively, the evaluating step may evaluate, by using, as a criterial timing, the timing based on either ~~the~~ its own data or the other data whichever being the operation timing closest to the operation timing defined by the operation timing data at a predetermined timing, from the criterial timing based on one of the data, whether the timing based on the other data is in the predetermined range.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 14, line 15, as follows:

Further, the evaluating step may evaluate whether the timing based on either ~~the~~ its own data or the other data is in a predetermined range from the timing based on the operation timing data at a predetermined timing, and whether both of the timing based on one of the data and the timing based on the other data are in the predetermined range.

Please delete the paragraph beginning at page 15, line 14, in its entirety.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 15, line 16, as follows:

Here, as a ~~preferable~~ score addition technique carried out in the evaluating step, the number of points to be added may be differed depending on a difference between the timing based on ~~the~~ its own data and the timing based on the other data, or the number of points to be added may be differed depending on both a

difference between the timing based on one of the data and the timing based on the operation timing data, and a difference between the timing based on one of the data and the timing based on the other of the data. Alternatively, when evaluating that ~~the~~ its own data and/or the other data is in the predetermined range, the evaluating step may increase a game score, and the number of points to be added thereto is differed depending on a difference of data to be evaluated.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 16, line 4, as follows:

A fifth aspect of ~~the~~ present exemplary non-limiting embodiments ~~invention~~ is directed to a program for controlling a game executed in a game machine, and the program includes a synchronizing step, a processing step, a storing step, an acquiring step, and an evaluating step.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 16, line 8, as follows:

In the synchronizing step, the start-timing synchronization is established in the game through data communications performed among other game machines. In the processing step, a predetermined process corresponding to a player's operation on the operation switches is carried out in response to when the game is synchronously started. In the storing step, ~~stored is its own~~ data relating to a timing at which the predetermined process is carried out is stored. In the acquiring step, ~~acquired is~~ other data relating to the timing at which the predetermined

process is carried out corresponding to the player's operation on the operation switches in the other game machines through communications is acquired. In the evaluating step, ~~evaluated is~~ correlation with the other game machines in terms of game process timing based on the its own data and the other data is evaluated.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 17, line 1, as follows:

A sixth aspect of ~~the~~ present exemplary non-limiting embodiments ~~invention~~ is directed to a game machine used in a game system structured by a plurality of the game machines executing a predetermined game in response to a player's operation, and a data processing device for evaluating operational correlation among the plurality of the game machines, and the game machine comprises a display section, operation switches, a communications section, a start timing synchronizing section, a prompt information storage section, a display control section, an operation timing storing section, and an operation timing data transmission section.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 18, line 6, as follows:

These and other objects, features, aspects and advantages of the present exemplary non-limiting embodiments ~~invention~~ will become more apparent from the following detailed description of the present exemplary non-limiting

embodiments ~~invention~~ when taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 18, line 12, as follows:

FIG. 1 is an outer view of a game machine 1 according to one exemplary non-limiting embodiment ~~of the present invention~~.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 19, line 24, as follows:

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF ~~THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT~~EXEMPLARY NON-LIMITING EMBODIMENTS.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 19, line 25, as follows:

FIG. 1 is an outer view of a game machine 1 according to one exemplary non-limiting embodiment ~~of the present invention~~. In the present embodiment, ~~exemplified is~~ a portable game machine as shown in FIG. 1 is described, but the game machine of the present ~~invention~~ exemplary non-limiting embodiment is not limited in type, and may be a stay-at-home type.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 22, line 12, as follows:

Next below, by referring to FIGS. 3 to 17, ~~described is~~ an exemplary case is described where the game machine 1 of this embodiment is a game machine

executing a music game. In this example, ~~described is~~ a case where two game machines 1 play music harmoniously as actual music bands is described.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 22, line 17, as follows:

The music game described here is ~~the~~ one by which operation information (timings and types) of the operation switches 2 needed for playing the music is displayed on the screen of the display section 3, and the music will be correctly played by the player's sequentially operating any appropriate operation switches 2 in accordance with the display. In this music game, for example, the correctness of the music play and harmoniousness at any part supposed to be in unison are indicated by scores. Here, unison denotes determination of harmoniousness (a degree of coincidence among sound timings) of the play for any specific parts of the music.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 23, line 6, as follows:

First, a player selects which guitar, i.e., a 1st guitar or a 2nd guitar, for a play part (step S301). In the present ~~invention~~exemplary non-limiting embodiment, out of the system (band) structured by a plurality of game machines 1, any one of the game machines 1 becomes a main device for controlling over the system, and the rest of the game machines 1 are sub devices. In this example, the game machine 1 selecting the 1st guitar in step S301 is the main, and the game

machine 1 selecting the 2nd guitar is the sub. Also, in this example, two play parts are presumably played by two game machines 1, but the number of the play parts may be three or more, and the number of the game machines 1 for simultaneous play may be three or more (in this case also, any one of the game machines 1 becomes the main device, and the rest of the game machines are the subs). Here, every game machine 1 may be so set as to operate as the main device without making a distinction between the main device and the sub device. Next, the game machines 1 each select which music to play (all of the game machines 1 select the same music) (step S302). Here, if any player selects game end in step S302, the corresponding game machine 1 accordingly ends the game (step S303, Yes). After the music is selected in step S302, the main game machine 1 goes through a process of establishing synchronization with the sub game machine 1 in terms of start timing (step S304).

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 26, line 1, as follows:

Next, referring to the flowchart of FIG. 5, ~~described is~~ the start timing synchronization process carried out in step S304 of FIG. 3 is described.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 27, line 14, as follows:

Next, referring to FIG. 6, ~~described is~~ an example of the music score data displayed in step S311 of FIG. 3 is described.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 27, line 16, as follows:

The music score data exemplarily shown in FIG. 6 is composed of, on a constant basis of the timing, information about the operation of the A button 2a and the B button 2b, and information about the operation of the cross key 2c. In the example of FIG. 6, a timing is constantly equal to a quarter of a bar, and operation information is recorded for any operation switch 2 needed for the timing. For example, in the music score data of the 1st guitar, with a timing number 1, ~~recorded is~~ information about operating only the "A button" is recorded, and with a timing number 2, ~~recorded is~~ information about simultaneously operating the "B button" and "the lower part of the cross key" is recorded. The above example is not restrictive, and the timing may be arbitrarily selected as to be one-eighth of a bar, for example.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 28, line 6, as follows:

Referring to FIG. 7, ~~described next is~~ an exemplary screen of the display section 3 having the music score data of FIG. 6 displayed thereon is described next.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 28, line 9, as follows:

In the example of FIG. 7, ~~displayed on the screen is~~ information is displayed on the screen about operating the A button 2a, the B button 2b, and the cross key 2c on the basis of two bars. In FIG. 7, O mark is used to indicate which of the A button 2a and the B button 2b is to be operated, and thereby, the player will know that he/she is supposed to operate the button indicated by the O mark. Also, an arrow in the O mark indicates which part of the cross key 2c is supposed to be operated simultaneously with the A button 2a or the B button 2b. Herein, the diagonally shaded area indicates the timing for operating the operation switches 2. It should be noted here that the description found in the drawing (e.g., "1st guitar") and the timing numbers ("1" to "8") are not displayed in the actual game. The timing for operation may be indicated not by shading the corresponding area but by sound.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 29, line 6, as follows:

Next, referring to the flowchart of FIG. 8, ~~described is~~ an operation process carried out in step S312 of FIG. 3 is described. This operation process is carried out by both the main game machine 1 and the sub game machine 1.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 29, line 10, as follows:

After displaying the music score data on the screen of the display section 3 with the music score data display process gone through, the game machine 1

determines whether the player has made any input through the operation switches 2 (step S801). If there is any input made through the operation switches 2, the game machine 1 records, on a predetermined memory, the inputted operation contents as operation data (step S802), and then determines whether the timing with which any of the operation switch 2 has been operated is the same as the timing which is defined and indicated by the music score data for operation (step S803). Here, if ~~determined~~ it is determined that now is ~~as~~ not yet the timing for operation, the game machine 1 generates a sound (or a phrase) corresponding to the operation switch 2 operated by the player (step S807), and ends this operation process. On the other hand, if it is determined that ~~as~~ now is the time for operation in step S803, the game machine 1 increases the game score, that is, adds some points to the current score corresponding to the coincidence of the timing (step S804) Thereafter, the game machine 1 refers to the recorded operation data so as to determine whether the operation switches 2 have been correctly operated, in terms of their types, as defined and indicated by the music score data (step S805). Here, if it is determined ~~as~~ that the operation has been correct, the game machine 1 increases the game score. That is, ~~adding~~ points are added to the current game score corresponding to the coincidence of the operation switches (step S806), ~~generating~~ a sound (or a phrase) is generated corresponding to any of the operation switches 2 operated by the player (step S807), and then ~~terminating~~ this operation process is terminated.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 30, line 12, as follows:

Next, referring to FIGS. 9 and 10, ~~described is~~ an example of the operation data recorded in step S802 of FIG. 8, and unison key data which is generated from the operation data is described.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 32, line 3, as follows:

Referring to the flowchart of FIG. 11, ~~described next is~~ the unison evaluation process carried out in step S314 of FIG. 3 is described next.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 33, line 10, as follows:

Alternatively, out of the unison evaluation process carried out by the main game machine 1, only a part relating to the correlation evaluation process may be carried out by some other machines. Specifically, the game machine 1 may be structured as a portable-type game machine, and another machine for going through the correlation evaluation process as a stay-at-home-type game machine (not shown), and a plurality of such portable-type game machines may be connected to the stay-at-~~hone~~home-type game machine for game play among those portable-type game machines. Thereafter, the unison key data may be transmitted to the stay-at-home-type game machine, and the stay-at-home-type game machine

accordingly evaluates and displays the correlation, for example. FIG. 12 is a flowchart of the unison evaluation process in such a case.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 34, line 20, as follows:

The game machines 1 then each receives the game score data transmitted from the separately-provided machine (steps S1203 and S1204). Note that, if the session ID is in use, the game machines 1 receive data only when the session ID is the same.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 35, line 20, as follows:

Referring to the flowchart of FIG. 14, ~~described next is~~ the correlation evaluation process carried out in step S1104 of FIGS. 11, 12, and 13 is described next.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 37, line 12, as follows:

Referring to FIGS. 15 to 17, ~~described below is~~ a determination method carried out by using the unison key data in steps S1401 and S1402 of FIG. 14 is described below. Here, in these drawings, two of the timing numbers 7 and 8 presumably form one unison part in the music.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 40, line 7, as follows:

Lastly, referring to FIG. 18, ~~described is~~ an exemplary case where the game machine 1 of the present embodiment is a game machine executing not a music game but ~~others~~another type of game is described. FIG. 18 is a diagram showing the process of the game machine 1 which executes a shooting game.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 41, line 5, as follows:

With such a sequence of processes, ~~provided is~~ a game technique of enabling a plurality of players to shoot the opponent's main character and others at the same time through teamwork is provided.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 41, line 9, as follows:

In the example of music game, the coincidence degree of the operation timings among the game machines 1 is determined. On the other hand, in the example of FIG. 18, ~~determined is~~ the coincidence degree of the process timing (timing when the opponent's main character is shot) among the game machines 1 is determined.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 42, line 8, as follows:

As described above, according to the game machine of one present exemplary non-limiting embodiment ~~of the present invention~~, in a game played by a plurality of game machines, evaluation is made according to the correlation

among several pieces of operation information obtained through communications with each of the game machines. Therefore, the correlation among the players' operations become high and the zest is increased to a greater degree than the time of independent play.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 43, line 8, as follows:

Moreover, communications is required only at the beginning and at the end of the game play, and thus there is no need for connection among the game machines by communications cables, for example. Therefore, the game machine, especially the portable-type game machine, can be moved freely during the game play, and the players may not be distracted and concentrate only on the game. ~~What is~~ Even better, no communications ~~is~~ are made during the game play so that the game machines are reduced in process load.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 43, line 17, as follows:

In the above exemplary embodiment, ~~exemplified is~~ the case of playing (internal session) the selection of music previously stored in the ROM 21 of the game cartridge 20 (or in the game machine 1) is described. Other than that, playing (CD session) the selection of music stored in music CDs, or playing (broadcast session) the selection of music on the air may be possible. In detail, in the case of CD session, ~~playing back~~ a music CD is played back first, and then

~~playing~~ the game (music play in the game) is played in accordance with the playing back music. Also, in the case of broadcast session, ~~receiving~~ any broadcast on the air is received first, and then ~~playing~~ the game is played in accordance with the playing-back music. ~~In the below, described is t~~The manner of playing ~~as such~~ is described below by referring to FIGS. 19 and 20.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 46, line 12, as follows:

While the ~~invention~~ present exemplary non-limiting embodiments has been described in detail, the foregoing description is in all aspects illustrative and not restrictive. It is understood that numerous other modifications and variations can be devised without departing from the scope of the invention.